

PRODUCT CLOSE-UP



TEMPUS TE-3 TUNNEL DRUMKIT

Tempus is a new name on the drum scene, having recently bought the Canadian Milestone drum company. The company remains based in Canada, and is presently manufacturing a wide range of drum sizes and drumkits. The Tempus shells are built from fiberglass with a gel/resin compound. All drum lugs are die-cast zinc. The inner lug nuts are brass, and are backed by rubber tubing to eliminate rattle. Three different series of drums are available: *Classic* (standard sizes), *Power* (extended depth sizes), and *Tunnel* (super-extended depth).

Components of the *TE-3 Tunnel kit* presented here include: 18x22 bass drum, 12x12 and 12x13 tom-toms, 17x15 floor tom, and an 8 x14 snare drum. No hardware is included, except for the Collarlock tom-tom holder.

Bass Drum

The *Tunnel* bass drum has 20 lugs. There are no T-handles; all tuning rods are drumkey-operated. Even though it's a bit more tedious for tuning, I like the idea, since you do not have to worry about a T-handle being in the way while setting up or packing into a case. The hoops, like the shell, are made of fiberglass, and the color is impregnated into the hoops. The batter hoop is slightly deeper than the audience side hoop for easy pedal mounting. The

hoops are more flexible than standard wooden ones (which may enable them to conform better to the shell and head hoop). Collarlock universal clamp brackets hold external *W* steel spike spurs. The clamps are drumkey-operated, and enable the spurs to fold right up against the shell. There is no provision for spur height adjustment, but that's okay, because it seems that the spurs are mounted at an ideal position anyway.

A smooth white head is fitted to the batter side of the drum; the audience side has an *Ebony Ambassador*, screened with the Tempus logo. A felt strip is included for batter head dampening. This super-sized bass drum has great attack and volume. Being fiberglass, it has a somewhat hard, "modern" sound, and excels in depth and definition.

Mounting System

Tempus has chosen to fit Collarlock equipment on its drumkits, and the tom-tom holder here is a double-mount, single post version. (For a complete review of Collarlock systems, see *MD*: June '85.)

Mounted in the center of the bass drum shell is a large die-cast aluminum plate with a split circular clamp, which accepts the 1" down tube. A cross bar is welded onto the top of this tube, forming a "T." This small bar is used for the large individual Collarlock L-arms, which are also

New Fiber Drum

encased in circular split clamps mounted on the bar. Each L-arm mates with an external block clamp bracket on each tom-tom. (All adjustments on all the clamps are done via a drumkey.) The L-arms also have wedge-shaped memory locks fitting right up underneath the drum brackets.

This double holder is one of the strongest I've seen, and is absolutely free of sinking, twisting, or shaking—which is especially amazing, considering the large drums it is holding. It's also quite versatile, giving a good range of angles. My only regret is that a drumkey must be used so often in setting heights, angles, and security. Nevertheless, the holder is a tough little monster and would be a welcome modification for any kit.

Tom-Toms

The 12x12 and 12x13 toms have 12 lugs each, and 2mm stamped steel hoops (made by Remo). The 17x15 floor tom has 16 lugs, plus three 1/2" steel legs, which are flared at their bottoms. These legs have neoprene caps at the tops, and locate into Collarlock universal block clamp brackets (again, secured with key screws and with wedge memory locks). All three toms are fitted with coated *Ambassador* batters and coated *Diplomat* bottoms. There are no mufflers installed.

As with the bass drum, the toms have nice volume and definition. They have a "live" sound, which for playing in miked situations could be better dealt with by changing the heads to a *Pinstripe/clear Ambassador* combination.

Snare Drum

The 8 X 14 fiberglass snare drum with this kit is just one of five different sizes that Tempus makes. It has 20 separate lugs and no muffler. A Pearl center-throw strainer is utilized, along with 20-strand wire snares held by plastic strips at both throw-off and butt sides. This is a no-nonsense strainer that works well. The drum comes equipped with Remo *Ambassador* heads: coated batter and clear snare side.

Even with its 8" depth, this drum is quite articulate and crisp. A deep sound can easily be obtained by changing the batter head type and its tuning. Its rimshot sound gives

by Bob Saydlowski, Jr.

glass kits

a good crack, but a little dampening could be used to ease the overtones.

Tempus' finishes are not a laminate or veneer, but are actually part of the shell. The "Ferrari Red" color I saw was flawless and had a nice gloss. A total of seven different colors are offered: black, white, yellow, red, grey, blue, and dark green. Each drum has a steel logo badge with its own stamped serial number.

Altogether, Tempus makes 12 bass drum sizes, 17 tom-tom sizes, 12 floor tom sizes, and five snare sizes. Some of these dimensions are quite un-standard—I might even say "exotic"—and I'm sure you can find whatever drum size you have in mind (within reason, of course). The *TE-3* kit reviewed here is one of five available configurations in the *Tunnel Series*, and retails at \$1,481 for the five drums plus tom-tom holder.

I've been waiting to review one of these Canadian kits ever since they were first christened "Milestone," and I'm happy I finally got the chance to. The Tempus drums are constructed very well, and have a great appearance. Even though the current trend is "back-to-wood," the fiberglass shells have a pleasing sound to my ear, and are adaptable to any musical situation. For more information, or a brochure, send \$2.00 to Tempus Instruments, Inc., 3-12320 Trites Road, Richmond, B.C., Canada V7E3R7.

IMPACT NITRO KIT

Every once in a while, a new drum design pops up, causing people to look twice (i.e., Trixon, North, Staccato, Migirian). After being in business for 11 years, Impact Industries has recently entered the drumkit market, utilizing a unique shell design and sound concept. Impact's shells are made of "high-tech" fiberglass and are extremely lightweight. What sets Impact off from all the conventionally styled drums is the shape of its drumshell—sort of a hybrid between Slingerland's *Cut-A-Way* toms and North toms. If you can visualize cutting the horn of a North drum straight off, what you're left with is basically what Impact has designed.

All the Impact tom-toms have rectangu-



lar frontal sound holes cut out, which aid in quick sound displacement—the main idea behind Impact drums. (The bass and snare are of conventional design.) The sound holes and shell bottoms of the toms are finished in chrome stripping and have rubber/vinyl gaskets surrounding the edges. The drums feature lug-tunable Remo *PTS* heads as standard equipment; the lugs are similar in shape to the V-shaped Yamaha *Stage Series*.

Two different kits are available at present: the *Nitro* and the *Blast*. Components of the Impact *Nitro* kit I tested are: 13x24 bass drum, 13x12 and 13x14 tom-toms, 22x16 floor tom (yes, that's right!), and a 7 x 14 snare drum.

Bass Drum

The 13 x 24 bass drum is one inch shallower than normal, and has 16 lugs with T-style rods, which enable fine-tuning of the *PTS* heads. The drum, of course, lacks normal hoops, as the *PTS* bass drum heads have their own hoops built right in, with chrome inlay. External two-piece telescoping spurs are fitted to the shell. These have threaded convertible tips, and are adjustable for forward angle and height. Both batter and audience sides of the drum have *PTS/CS Dark* heads. Since its shell is fiberglass, the bass drum has a certain degree of brightness to it. It does produce a nice thump, with ample volume. The lug-tuning capability can enable the *PTS* heads to be tuned to a higher pitch if desired.

Mounting System

Impact's tom-tom holder uses separate tubular arms that locate into their own holes in the base plate. The arms are adjustable for angle via a connected ratchet, and have key-operated memory locks at both ends. The bass plate holes and drum bracket openings all have nylon bushings inside, and use T-screws pressing against the bushings to secure the arms. (The arms pass through the drums.) The holder is a duplicate of a widely used mount system, introduced by Pearl. It is easy to set up and gives enough height for the toms. The arms did twist a bit under pressure until all the screws were torqued down hard.

Tom-Toms

The two single-headed rack toms have 13" depths, and head diameters of 12" and 14". Their lugs have tiny bass drum-like claws mated with the tuning rods, which, again, assist in fine-tuning of the *PTS* batter head. The 12" tom has five lugs; the 14" has six. The floor tom has a 16" head, and it measures 22" at its deepest point. It has seven lugs, plus three legs that locate into T-screw brackets. All three toms are fitted with *PTS/CS Dark* heads.

Being only single-headed, the toms have a wet, "thuddy" sound, but have great projection. One immediate difference in the power of these toms can be heard by covering the sound hole with your hand and striking the drum. Removing your

hand to "open up" the sound hole results in a great increase in volume and attack (hence, the reason for these ports). For a more live sound, coated *PTS* heads can be used.

Snare Drum

The 7x14 snare drum is of conventional design, and has 12 double-ended lugs, a laminated chrome finish, two ventholes, and a parallel-action strainer with a reinforcing rod inside the shell. The strainer is lever-operated, and has large fine-tune knobs at both ends. Twenty-strand wire snares extend past the shell and directly connect to the strainer. Both throw-off and butt sides have steel guard gates attached

onto the neighboring tension rods. The strainer worked well, without choking the drum's tone. The drum has an internal muffler, similar to Tama's, in that it is knob-operated, and has a "one-touch" stop ring around the knob for instant on/off. (The muffler on this particular drum refused to tighten up for some reason. I'd be happier with no muffler at all; I'd prefer to use an external damper instead.)

The batter side has a regular 12-hole steel hoop, and a conventional coated *Ambassador* head, while the bottom has a *PTS* snare-side head held onto the drum via tiny claws and key rods. The drum had a crisp, bright sound and a good rimshot. Response was even all around the playing

head.

Hardware

Impact offers two lines of imported hardware. The *Deluxe* hardware included with the *Nitro* kit has double-braced tripods with memory locks at the height joints. (The *Standard* line features single-braced and no memory fittings.)

The *Deluxe* bass drum pedal has a split footboard with toe stop, plus a single expansion spring stretched upward from the frame. Tension is adjustable at the top of the spring strut. Pedal linkage is done with a flexible synthetic strap, the length of which is adjustable. (It could be a bit longer, though.) There are two sprung spurs at the base of the frame, and the pedal clamps to the hoop using a long angled T-screw set off to the left, which pushes down on the hinged clamp plate. The action was a bit stiff for me, but the pedal was efficient and noiseless.

The straight cymbal stand has two adjustable tiers, and the boom cymbal stand has one (plus the adjustable boom arm with counterweight). Their tilters operate on concealed ratchets. Both stands give ample height and will easily hold the largest of cymbals. The snare stand has the common basket design with carriage nut. The angle is set by a concealed ratchet, and the stand holds the snare drum quite securely.

Like the bass pedal, the hi-hat has a split footboard with adjustable toe stop. It has a chain linkage and an externally housed spring. Tension is easily adjusted by a threaded cap atop the spring chamber. The stand has the usual screw cymbal cup tilter, plus one sprung spur at the frame base. The hi-hat stand had nice, silent action, but was a bit too bouncy for my taste.

Impact has five laminated colors available: black, white, chrome, red prism, and blue prism. For easy packing, all the toms can stack into the floor tom. (Impact has plans to manufacture cases for its drums, as well.) Add-on toms are also available in 13x8 and 13x10 sizes, as are 4 1/4" and 6" depth snare drums.

One thing to remember while using *PTS* heads is that the head is the sound *maker*; the shell is merely the sound *projector*. Impact has used a sensible design to get the sound out quickly, and since fiberglass is a harder, more reflective surface than wood, there is, of course, increased projection. If the drums are *too* loud for a particular musical setting, you could either stuff up the sound ports with foam, or turn the drums so the openings are facing you, instead of the audience!

The *Nitro* kit as reviewed retails complete at \$1,190; the *Blast* kit retails at \$995, and has a slightly smaller bass and snare drum, plus lower-line hardware. If it's volume and easy portability you're after, check out the Impact line. For more information, write: Impact Industries, 904 Sumner Street, Wausau, WI 54401. ♣



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Thanks to Tris Imboden, Chester Thompson, Michael White and Alan Vavrin for sharing their experience with the students at MI and thanks to Pearl Drums for making these great players available to us.



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